UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/516
6 October 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Agenda item 96 (b)

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

Observance of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought: implementation of resolution 49/115

Report of the Secretary-General

A. Introduction

1. By its resolution 49/115 of 19 December 1995, the General Assembly proclaimed 17 June World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, to be observed beginning in 1995.

2. In that resolution, the Assembly invited all States to devote the World Day to promoting public awareness on international cooperation to combat desertification and the effects of drought and on the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.

3. It further invited the Secretary-General (a) to make recommendations on ways and means by which the Secretariat could assist Member States, upon their request, in organizing their national activities for the observance of the World Day, and (b) to make the necessary arrangements to ensure the success of the observance by the United Nations of the World Day.

4. The present report reviews measures taken in implementation of resolution 49/115. It is closely related to document A/50/515, reviewing measures taken pursuant to resolution 49/234 of 23 December 1994 on the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa.

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B. Ways and means by which the Secretariat could assist Member States in organizing their national activities

5. Ways and means by which the interim secretariat could assist Member States, upon their request, in organizing their national activities for the observance of the World Day are summarized below. It is understood, of course, that assistance by the Secretariat can only be provided within the limit of its resources.

6. Within this context, the Secretariat could provide assistance, upon the request of Member States, through one or more of the following measures:

(a) Facilitating the procurement of information kits on the Convention comprising the text of the Convention in booklet format, an explanatory leaflet and fact sheets, as well as a simplified guide to the Convention;

(b) Facilitating the procurement of background materials to Member States for dissemination;

(c) Providing advice and suggestions on activities, based on previous experiences;

(d) Giving advice on how best to involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and how to relate to the NGO network;

(e) Making staff members of the Secretariat available to assist in selected events of particular significance;

(f) Preparing a compilation of the various celebrations and/or activities world wide and making such information available through electronic means.

C. Arrangements to ensure the success of the observance by the United Nations of the World Day

7. Consistent with the resolution, the interim secretariat and United Nations programmes and specialized agencies held, on 17 June 1995, a number of activities and events in various capitals world wide. The main purpose of these activities was to raise public awareness and target special audiences with a view to ensuring the successful implementation of the Convention. These were in addition to awareness days and other activities at the national and subregional levels held during that period, to implement resolution 5/1 adopted by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, on urgent measures for Africa, and interim action in other regions.

8. Major activities included the following:

(a) A policy dialogue in Geneva on the theme "Combating desertification through alternative energy strategies: a focus on Africa" and a briefing

session for the media, organized by the interim secretariat and the International Academy of Environmental Safety;

(b) The production and launching of (i) a simplified version of the Convention entitled "Down to Earth" jointly produced by the interim secretariat and the Centre for our Common Future, with the financial support of the Government of Switzerland, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), (ii) a Convention kit comprising a booklet, an explanatory leaflet and 10 fact sheets, and (iii) a simplified guide to the Convention;

(c) The production by the interim secretariat, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), of a video report filmed in Cape Verde and Mauritania, portraying the causes and effects of desertification;

(d) A presentation ceremony and awards for effective action against desertification by UNEP, and celebrations for Desertification Day in Nairobi, as well as a UNEP-sponsored regional conference on desertification in Almaty;

(e) A seminar on desertification and drought organized by IFAD in Rome, as well as the launching of the publication "Down to Earth", a press briefing and a joint celebration by IFAD and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

(f) An exhibition, an information brochure on its activities and a public meeting organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, together with the Observatory of Sahara and Sahel (OSS);

(g) The production of posters, pamphlets, press releases, as well as the holding of interviews and press briefings by various agencies and programmes;

(h) Many activities of a similar nature organized by subregional organizations, Governments and NGOs at the subregional and national levels.

9. In addition to the above, two campaigns were mounted jointly by Earth Action, a London-based NGO, and the interim secretariat, one aimed at the media and the other at parliamentarians. The campaigns comprised an editorial advisory and a parliamentary alert on desertification.

UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/517
6 October 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Agenda item 45

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM AND LASTING PEACE AND PROGRESS IN FASHIONING A REGION OF PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/137 of 19 December 1994, in which I was requested, inter alia, to devise, in consultation with the Government of El Salvador, the Member States and the specialized agencies, "procedures for providing El Salvador, in the context of the Peace Agreement, with the necessary cooperation and assistance in the period after the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), in order to safeguard peace and the strengthening and consolidation of national reconciliation, democracy and sustainable development".

2. It will be recalled that on 6 February 1995, before the expiration of the mandate of ONUSAL, I informed the President of the Security Council of my intention to set up a team of United Nations officials to provide good offices and verify implementation of the outstanding provisions of the peace agreements (S/1995/143). The President of the Security Council subsequently notified me that the Security Council members welcomed this arrangement (S/1995/144).

3. On 27 April 1995, the parties to the Chapultepec peace agreements signed a programme of work for the completion of all outstanding areas of the peace accords (S/1995/407). On the following day the Security Council adopted resolution 991 (1995), formally marking the end of the mandate of ONUSAL. The new Mission of the United Nations in El Salvador (MINUSAL) began its work as planned on 1 May 1995, led by Mr. Enrique ter Horst, my Special Representative. With its staff partly funded by voluntary contributions, MINUSAL has represented a much reduced United Nations presence, but one that confirms the Organization's continuing support of peace-building in El Salvador. In May 1995 I established

the Trust Fund for MINUSAL in order to support the Mission's activities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those countries that have already made contributions to the fund (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) and encourage others to do so.

4. The programme of work had divided the remaining accords into six areas (public security, land transfer, human settlements, reinsertion programmes, Fund for the Protection of the Wounded and Disabled, and legislative reforms) and established dates by which specific provisions in each area must be completed. It also provided for weekly convening of bilateral and trilateral monitoring and follow-up mechanisms which facilitated the work of the mission and, in some areas, accelerated execution of pending points. Monthly updates on the status of the programme of work, which I have circulated informally to members of the Security Council, have revealed the continuing determination of the parties to the peace agreements to bring them to completion. They have also revealed the difficulties and obstacles in carrying this process forward, as well as the need for the authorities concerned to apply themselves to this task with vigour, addressing these difficulties and obstacles with all necessary sense of purpose.

5. MINUSAL has continued to exercise its good offices with a view to assisting in carrying the process forward, and in so doing has contributed to the generation of confidence in the ongoing process of consolidating advances through the strengthening of El Salvador's democratic institutions, as well as the full implementation of the peace agreements. Five months after the establishment of the Mission, it is clear that implementation of some elements of the peace accords remains incomplete, while significant delays persist in the case of others.

6. The present report assesses the state of implementation of the various aspects of the peace agreements verified by MINUSAL between 1 May and 30 September 1995. Besides the introduction and my concluding observations, the report is divided into six sections, related to: public security; human rights and the judicial system; economic and social issues; electoral matters; technical assistance programmes; and administrative aspects.

II. PUBLIC SECURITY

7. The creation of a new civilian police force, the National Civil Police (PNC), was one of the fundamental elements of the peace agreements, and perhaps their most ambitious single component. In the two and a half years that have elapsed since its initial deployment, PNC has expanded and assumed virtually all public security functions. In the three years since its foundation, the National Public Security Academy (ANSP) has graduated a total of 8,482 agents, of whom some 200 are mid- and high-level officers. While the strength of PNC has now exceeded by some 2,700 the target indicated in the accords, it has continued to appear insufficient to counter the growing tide of crime afflicting the country. Public insecurity, fostered by already high levels of common crime, has only grown in the face of an increase in violence associated with drug trafficking, organized crime and the proliferation of street gangs and illegally armed vigilante groups that have arisen to combat them.

8. In this disturbing situation, the authorities have argued that the continuing deployment of joint patrols of PNC and the Armed Forces in rural areas is necessary to combat and deter delinquency. In August 1995 some officials publicly recommended extending these patrols to urban areas, a suggestion that was officially dismissed by the Armed Forces. As I noted in my last report on the work of ONUSAL (S/1995/220, para. 23), the use of military forces for public security purposes is not in compliance with the constitutional procedures established pursuant to the peace accords, except when the National Civil Police has been found incapable of addressing a specific crisis. The President may then issue such an order only if it is accompanied by a notification to the Legislative Assembly. The Mission has suggested that this constitutional provision be regulated by a secondary law.

9. Compliance with most of the points in the area of public security identified by the programme of work, while welcome in itself, has not served to strengthen PNC and ANSP institutionally. Rather, in this domain a series of troubling developments have arisen that point to a potential reversal in the process of consolidating PNC and highlight a lack of coherence between its development and the public security scheme designed in the peace accords. These developments have included: months of delay in the naming of an Inspector General of PNC during a period in which reported irregularities within PNC have evidenced the urgent need for the effective occupation of this position; a reluctance to renew fully the Division of Criminal Investigation and develop the Department of Investigation of Organized Crime; strong indications of criminality, including alleged assassination and the membership of illegal armed groups, within PNC itself; and initiatives to develop and enhance public security structures parallel to and possibly undermining those mandated by the peace agreements.

10. Indicative of these developments is the fact that the Police Career Law, indispensable for guaranteeing the professional proficiency and ethical conduct of PNC, has yet to be approved. However, it is to be welcomed that the Government has requested that MINUSAL advise on the drafting of the Law, and that it be submitted to the Legislative Assembly before the end of November 1995. At the further request of the Government, the Mission has carried out a second evaluation of the public security sector with recommendations for governmental action.

11. The developments outlined above make it clear that it is of crucial importance that government efforts to counter the exceptionally high levels of criminality affecting the country should not be carried out at the expense of training new police agents and the further development of PNC into an institution which will be effective in protecting the rights of all Salvadorians.

III. HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

12. The profile of the office of the National Counsel for Human Rights (NCHR) has risen markedly since the election of a new ombudswoman in March 1995. Its institutional development, which is supported by a technical assistance project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), moves steadily forward. It

is to be welcomed that coordination between NCHR and PNC in handling public disturbances has improved considerably, particularly in the capital. However, in order to discharge its mandate fully NCHR will require continued strengthening and a higher budgetary provision.

13. The area of the programme of work that has seen the least advance during the past five months is approval of the legislative reforms required to comply with the binding recommendations of the Commission on the Truth. The Legislative Assembly has approved only the Government's ratification of international human rights legal agreements and deposit of the necessary instruments with the secretariats of the United Nations and the Organization of American States and the Government's recognition of the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. However, two MINUSAL staff members are actively participating in current technical discussions being carried out in the Assembly. Four of the most important legal texts (the new Penal and Criminal Procedures codes, the new Penitentiary Law and the Constitutional Reforms related to the guarantees of due process) seem likely to be approved before the end of November 1995. The other reforms for which the programme of work set a deadline of 31 October 1995 will not be ready for approval before mid-1996.

14. The screening and vetting of judges by the Supreme Court of Justice elected in July 1994 has been proceeding slowly. MINUSAL has continued to encourage the Court in the good work it has initiated, but this effort is far from nearing completion. The preparation by the Court of the legal texts mandating further judicial reforms for submission to the Legislative Assembly in accordance with the programme of work has yet to begin.

IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES

15. The delays that have plagued the land transfer programme (PTT) persist as it enters into its final and most difficult stage. They can be attributed both to continuing problems of a legal, technical and procedural nature and to the increasing scarcity of land for sale. Recurring problems with mid-level administrators in the Lands Bank in particular have suggested that political factors may also have contributed to the delays.

16. Increased efforts by the relevant Government bodies from April to July 1995 led to a notable increase in the number of beneficiaries (to an average of 1,400 a month) who received land titles. As of 19 September 1995, 74 per cent of the potential beneficiaries had received titles to land. However, it has recently come to light that only 25 per cent of these beneficiaries had had their titles filed with the land registry. A follow-up team has been formed to facilitate the legal processes for registration. The land programme can only be considered to have been completed when the beneficiaries are able to register their titles and thus to sell the land if they so wish. A sharp decline in the rate of transfer in the month of August is a source of concern and could portend a considerable delay in meeting the goals of the programme of work.

17. It is consistent with the logic of the land transfer programme that the complex issue of relocation has been left to the end. In coming months the rate of transfer is likely to remain low as it becomes necessary to relocate both

those who are on lands whose owners do not want to sell and those within human settlements who are also potential beneficiaries of PTT but are unable to satisfy their land requirements nearby. Past experience of relocation has been discouraging, with most of the relocated beneficiaries abandoning their land or returning to their place of origin.

18. Firm advances have recently been registered in the area of rural human settlements, albeit after lengthy delays in the approval of the special regime for their transfer. This was finally achieved in August 1995, together with agreement on an operational plan. At current rates of progress it is foreseeable that before 31 October 1995 the transfer of the rural human settlements may have begun. The complex social and political circumstances of the rural human settlements indicates that the transfer of their productive, social and habitational infrastructure will remain an issue of particular delicacy, with a potential for aggravated social tension within the regions where they are situated. If these problems are not sorted out, the goal of completing this area of the programme in the second quarter of 1996 could be in jeopardy.

19. All certificates within the initial universe of beneficiaries identified by the Frente Farabundo Martí para Liberación Nacional (FMLN) for the urban human settlements have been distributed by Government authorities. However, the legalization and registry of beneficiaries' titles, a prerequisite for the disbursement of funds, is likely to prove a complex and lengthy process.

20. Reintegration programmes have been advancing steadily. Only a few specific components remain and it is likely that they will be completed before the end of the year. However, concerns have been growing about the impact of the programmes on those they have benefited and their sustainability over the medium and long term. In this context the Government has recently requested UNDP to prepare an evaluation of the effectiveness of the reintegration programmes.

V. ELECTORAL MATTERS

21. The experience of the presidential, legislative and local government elections of 1994 convinced participants and observers alike that profound reforms to the Salvadorian electoral system were necessary (S/1994/536, para. 17). During 1995, pursuant to an agreement outside the framework of the peace accords, a presidentially appointed inter-party commission issued a series of recommendations on electoral reform. The commission called for a new single identity and voter registration card to be issued by an autonomous body created for that end alone, the introduction of residential voting, the drawing-up of a new electoral roll and the reform of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. However, progress in the area of electoral reforms has recently been hindered by the proposed introduction of proportional representation at the municipal level, to which the majority within the Legislative Assembly objects.

22. In order to ensure the legitimacy of the local government and legislative elections of 1997, I would urge members of all parties to ensure the timely adoption of the electoral reforms. I would also like to reiterate that an administrative and structural transformation is necessary if the Supreme

Electoral Tribunal is to become a credible, professional, democratic and non-partisan institution.

VI. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

23. MINUSAL and UNDP have jointly prepared a set of 10 technical assistance projects critical for consolidating the peace process and, in particular, for strengthening the institutions created or reformed by the peace accords. These technical assistance projects, which have a total cost of US$ 9.8 million, cover administration of justice, public security and land and reintegration programmes and have been submitted to donor countries for funding. As of September 1995, the donor community had announced the contribution, via distinct funding mechanisms, of $4.23 million, which will allow for four projects in the areas of public security and administration of justice to be implemented. Activities within two further projects in the area of administration of justice can also be initiated. UNDP, responding at the Government's request, continues to seek funds for the remaining programmes.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

24. MINUSAL comprises 11 international staff, 8 civilian police consultants and a small administrative team and is supported by UNDP in the financial disbursement of allotted funds and other administrative functions.

25. MINUSAL has deployed its police consultants throughout the country, thus facilitating on-the-spot verification of compliance with the programme of work. The advances registered since 1 May 1995 make it possible to reduce their number and bring down MINUSAL's strength to 10 international staff, 4 civilian police consultants and support staff.

26. Mr. Enrique ter Horst, who has been Chief of Mission of both ONUSAL (since April 1994) and MINUSAL, left El Salvador at the end of September 1995 to return to the Venezuelan diplomatic service. He has been replaced as my Representative and Director of Mission by Mr. Ricardo Vigil. Mr. Vigil is well known to the parties in El Salvador as he opened the preparatory office for what eventually became ONUSAL in January 1991 and then served with ONUSAL as Principal Political and Legal Adviser to the Chief of Mission until March 1992.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

27. MINUSAL's ability to carry out its functions successfully has been attributable in large measure to its retention of some of ONUSAL's most experienced civilian and police staff, thus ensuring continuity in verification of the outstanding areas of the peace agreements and in the exercise of good offices.

28. While there is no question of the Government's political will to comply fully with its commitments under the peace agreements, I agree with it and FMLN that the continued presence of a small Mission is necessary to fulfil the

undertaking of the United Nations to verify implementation of the peace agreements. Depending on the rate of progress in the coming months, it should be possible to reduce further the size of the Mission and gradually phase it out.

29. In the immediate future, it is of paramount importance that efforts to counter the increase in criminal activity do not jeopardize the institutional development of PNC and the Police Academy and that these objectives be pursued simultaneously and in a mutually reinforcing manner. The concept of the National Civil Police, as embodied in the peace accords, must be preserved and sustained. It is encouraging that the Government is aware of the need to change course and, in agreement with FMLN, asked MINUSAL to evaluate the public-security sector and present recommendations to that end.

30. Close monitoring and support for the land transfer programme, as well as for the transfer of the rural human settlements, will continue to be necessary at the regional and central levels in order to address bottlenecks and encourage an increase in the pace of implementation. MINUSAL will also continue to provide advisory support to the formulation of the legislative reforms required by the recommendations of the Commission on the Truth.

31. For the above reasons, I propose to extend the Mission for a further six months, until 30 April 1996, with a gradual reduction of its strength and costs. I am encouraged to believe that a substantial portion of the budget for its extension will be funded by donor countries, a number of whom have already generously contributed to the process of implementing and consolidating the peace accords.

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Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/518
6 October 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Agenda items 12, 20, 23, 24,
39, 52, 94, 95, 96, 97,
100, 101, 102, 161 and 163

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990s

LAW OF THE SEA

LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

RENEWAL OF THE DIALOGUE ON STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE CONVENING OF A UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Letter dated 2 October 1995 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77 adopted on the occasion of the nineteenth annual meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 29 September 1995 (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would highly appreciate if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 12, 20, 23, 24, 39, 52, 94, 95, 96, 97, 100, 101, 102, 161 and 163.

(Signed) Felipe MABILANGAN
Permanent Representative of the
Philippines to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77
New York

ANNEX

Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77
adopted on 29 September 1995

1. The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held in New York on 29 September 1995.

2. The Ministers expressed the view that the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations provided a historic opportunity for all Member States of the United Nations to work towards fulfilling the purposes and principles of the Charter with renewed vigor and effectiveness in order to ensure a better life for all peoples, the eradication of poverty as well as reducing inequalities and gaps in living standards among nations and promoting development. They were convinced this remained the critical challenge for mankind as it entered the 21st century. Towards this end, the Ministers emphasized that in a world characterized by deepening interdependence and the globalization and the liberalization of the world economy, which presents both opportunities and challenges in terms of positive growth impulses and negative shocks, peace and security cannot be ensured in the absence of sustained economic growth and development, particularly in developing countries.

3. In reviewing developments in the world economic situation, the Ministers noted that there exist some positive trends in the world economy but continued to express concern at the slow and unbalanced growth of the global economy. They also expressed concern at the continuing adverse external economic environment for development characterized by increased protectionist tendencies in and unilateral actions by the developed countries, the worsening terms of trade of developing countries, stagnation and decline in ODA flows, restrictions on access to technologies critical to development, the inadequate allocation of resources of international financial institutions and volatile financial flows to developing countries linked, among others, to instability in global capital markets and fluctuations in exchange rates. Moreover, they noted with concern that the income gap between the developed and developing countries continued to widen. They stressed the need for these trends to be reversed decisively.

4. The Ministers stressed that international cooperation for development should be aimed at creating an international economic environment which supports and facilitates the national efforts of developing countries aimed at renewing sustained economic growth and development. Essential to this was the need for continuous macroeconomic policy coordination at the international level to foster the sustained growth of the world economy and for international economic decision-making processes to be transparent and involve fully the developing countries. At the same time, they stressed the critical need for developed countries and developing countries to engage in a comprehensive and constructive dialogue on all key development issues and to foster a genuine partnership for development. The early fulfillment of agreed international commitments and targets on development, which, in turn, required the provision of adequate resources, was deemed necessary. They reiterated that without adequate resources the development commitments agreed at the various international conferences and meetings on development would remain unfulfilled.

5. They also expressed concern at actions aimed at introducing new conditionalities for international economic cooperation, thereby undermining the sovereignty of nations. Development prospects were being constrained by attempts to introduce non-economic conditionalities on trade, ODA and technology transfer, even as resources for development were

declining and developing countries faced restrictions on market access of commodities, manufactures and services.

6. The Ministers also called upon the international community for the immediate elimination of coercive economic measures against developing countries which have not been authorized by the relevant organs of the UN or are inconsistent with the principles contained in the UN Charter as a means of forcibly imposing the will of one state on another.

7. The Ministers also stressed the urgent need to alleviate the impact of economic sanctions on the humanitarian needs of the targeted population, by examining and addressing such impact.

8. The Ministers affirmed their commitment to negotiate an action-oriented Agenda for Development which reflects the major concerns of developing countries in particular the need to implement existing international commitment for development, restoring both the issue of development to the heart of the UN agenda and the centrality of the UN in promoting international cooperation for development, and creating a balance between UN activities for development and its other activities, and providing for an increased commitment to the development of developing countries as well as for increasing international resources for development. In this regard, they noted the state of negotiations on the Agenda and urged all members of the Group to continue close coordination on all outstanding issues.

9. The Ministers called upon all States to assert the requisite political will to ensure an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system with the aim of achieving the complete integration of the developing countries into the world economy and the new international trading system. They reiterated the need for full implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreement and also called upon Member States, especially the developed countries, to implement fully the commitments agreed upon in the Final Act. In this regard, they also stressed that the Final Act confers special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the net food importing countries. The Ministers further encouraged Member States who have not done so to submit, as appropriate, the WTO Agreement for the consideration of their respective authorities with a view to seeking approval of the Agreement in accordance with their national procedures.

10. They rejected unilateral actions of a protectionist nature, particularly those implemented after the Marakesh accords, which are inconsistent with multilateral trade agreements and emphasized the important role of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in contributing to a rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system. The Ministers also emphasized the need to use existing dispute settlement mechanisms of the WTO in order to resolve any trade controversies that may arise. They further stressed the need for positive measures to ensure that developing countries secure a greater share in international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development, and for measures to mitigate any negative and adverse effects on the developing countries from the implementation of the Agreement, including through compensation, enhanced market access provisions and financial

assistance towards structural economic transformation.

11. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the Government of the Republic of Singapore would host the First Ministerial Review Conference of the World Trade Organisation in December 1996.

12. The Ministers recognized sub-regional and regional economic cooperation as an important means for expanding trade and investment opportunities as well as the transfer of technology. They stressed the need for a strong commitment by the international community to pursue regional economic cooperation within the framework of an open, equitable, non-discriminatory and rule-based multilateral trading system.

13. They further rejected the use of disguised protectionist measures in the form of new concepts seeking to link domestic standards relating to environment, labor laws, human rights, and other social issues, through the application of arbitrary trade measures and bilateral pressures against developing countries.

14. The Ministers urged the international community particularly the developed countries and international organizations to fulfill their commitments on the transfer of substantial new and additional financial resources and technology to the developing countries to meet their development challenges and implement existing development commitments.

15. The Ministers stressed that such resource mobilization for development must be reinforced by reductions in military expenditures in developed countries, including in the fields of production, stockpiling and developing all types of weapons, in particular nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, along the guidelines agreed upon in the context of global disarmament and the priorities set forth by the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and thus the channeling of resources released for supporting the developing countries in their efforts to promote social and economic development.

16. The Ministers while welcoming the increase in private foreign financial flows to many developing countries, stressed the importance that such flows, particularly foreign investment, be increasingly directed towards all developing countries and towards increasing productive capacity, as well as be aimed at enhancing economic growth and opportunities in developing countries. They also urged the international community to consider establishing transparent measures for monitoring short-term private flows so as to stimulate further investments in productive activities and to safeguard developing countries from the adverse effects of volatility in such flows. In this regard, they noted the increased vulnerability of developing countries to external shocks due to the increased integration of the world economy, and their economic liberalization efforts. Capital exporting countries must also enable, facilitate and promote foreign direct investment flows to developing countries, through incentives as well as through removal of barriers to import of goods and services from these countries. While paying due attention to the role of transnational corporations (TNCs) in the field of investment, they stressed that efforts

should be pursued to guarantee that capital flows emanating, inter alia, from TNCs should correspond to the national policies and priorities of the host country.

17. The Ministers regretted that despite the implementation of several approaches undertaken over the past decade by the international community, the debt crisis continues to persist as one of the main constraints for the development of developing countries, including for the least developed countries, and for those at the lower, lower-middle and middle-income levels. They reiterated the urgent need for the international community, particularly the donor countries and international financial institutions to adopt an effective, comprehensive and equitable, once-and-for-all development oriented and durable solution to the debt problem of the developing countries, including debt reduction and increased concessional financial flows for the least developed countries and Africa. At the same time, they stressed that structural adjustment policies must not divert resources away from social priorities in debtor countries.

18. The Ministers noted that many developing countries had adopted economic reforms under the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the Bretton Woods institutions. These reforms have been accompanied by adverse and significant social costs. They therefore called for a review of the programmes aimed at ameliorating the social and other costs of adjustment through appropriate poverty eradication measures and effective measures to address social priorities.

19. The Ministers noted that the efforts of developing countries to mobilize domestic resources for development needed to be supplemented by external resources commensurate with their development needs. In this regard, the Ministers expressed concern over the growing trend within the United Nations system regarding the diversion of the resources and the shifting of the priorities to other countries at the expense of developing countries.

20. The Ministers reiterated the urgent need for a substantial expansion of official development assistance (ODA) in view of the declining levels of such assistance over recent years. In this regard, they strongly urged compliance with internationally agreed targets of ODA and commitments for new and additional resources, particularly the fulfilment by the donor countries who had failed to do so of the 0.7 percent of their GNP by the year 2000 and commitments reflected in Agenda 21. They also expressed concern over attempts to reduce levels of ODA. They also stressed the need for qualitative improvements in ODA by the donor countries, inter alia, through reduced costs of repayment.

21. The Ministers reiterated the urgency of convening a United Nations Conference on the Financing of Development and welcomed the recommendation recently made in this regard by the Secretary-General, contained in his report on an Agenda for Development.

22. The Ministers stressed the importance to developing countries of access to science and technology in order to sustain their economic growth and development. Hence, the need for developing countries to participate in, benefit from and contribute to the rapid advances in

science and technology was underscored. The Ministers called upon the international community to help developing countries strengthen and develop their endogenous capacities and capabilities in science and technology, including in the area of environmentally sound technologies and new and emerging technologies. They also called for removing all barriers on access to technology and stressed that the transfer of technology should not be left solely in the hands of the private sector or based on market prices, and should enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the developing countries in the world market as well as improve the quality of life, health and the environment. In this context, they stressed the importance of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. They further called for the establishment of and/or strengthening national technology information centres in developing countries and their networking on regional and global levels to promote technology research, development and dissemination among developing countries.

23. The Ministers stressed the critical importance of effective follow up to landmark UN conferences held since 1990 to ensure that the commitments, recommendations and measures agreed to at those conferences are implemented as soon as possible. In this process, it is essential to ensure the thematic unity of the outcome of each conference while ensuring a coordinated approach on cross cutting issues. They endorsed the decision adopted in this regard in the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in June-July 1995 and further reiterated the need to ensure that each functional commission was treated on an equal footing. The size and composition of the commissions involved in the follow up to conferences such as the Population Commission and the Commission for Social Development should be brought on a par with others such as the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Commission on Human Rights. The Economic and Social Council should also develop its work programme and make recommendations regarding those of the functional commissions to ensure a coordinated follow up.

24. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to realizing the goals for children set out in the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the World Summit for Children and restated most recently at the World Summit for Social Development.

25. The Ministers stressed the need for prompt and full implementation of the commitments and recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which have more relevance today than ever before. In this regard, they stressed that such implementation should not contradict the right of developing countries to benefit fully from the utilization of their resources vital for sustained economic growth and development. They also urgently called on the international community, particularly the developed countries, to fulfill all their commitments contained in Agenda 21.

26. They expressed their profound regret that the developed countries have failed to fulfill the commitments they made at UNCED and renewed their call on developed countries to fulfill their commitments to provide adequate, predictable, new and additional financial and other resources towards this end. They also reaffirmed the important role that the Bretton Woods and

other international financial institutions should play in this regard. They also stressed that developed countries should take concrete measures for the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms.

27. They emphasized the importance of implementing the recommendation of the International Conference on Population and Development into action at all levels, and that such implementation would require new and additional resources.

28. The Ministers reiterated the importance of convening a Global Conference on Migration and Development bearing in mind the recommendations of the General Assembly, and reaffirmed the need for international cooperation and concerted responses to the plight and predicament of migrant workers and their families. Towards this end, they encouraged all countries to become party to the UN Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Their Families.

29. The Ministers stressed that in order for developing countries to implement the decisions under the Convention on Biological Diversity, priority should be given to the access and transfer of appropriate biotechnologies, and to a more constructive and cooperative approach by developed countries with developing country partners for the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of biological resources. In this context, they consider the need to examine ways and means for the effective protection, compensation and use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices of forest dwellers, indigenous people and other local communities, as well as fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from such knowledge, innovations and practices. The Ministers also supported the idea to enhance the scope of the debate with regard to this issue in different fields. The Ministers also welcomed the generous offer of the Government of Indonesia to host the COP-2 of the Convention on Biodiversity in November 1995 and urged member states to participate actively in the Conference.

30. The Ministers underscored their determination to adhere to the principles and fulfill the commitments contained in the Declaration of the World Summit for Social Development and emphasized the importance of implementing the Programme of Action aimed at eradication of poverty, enhancement of productive employment and reduction of unemployment, and to foster social integration.

31. The Ministers welcomed the convening of the First Conference of the Parties on the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the decisions agreed and noted that it was a first step in the process which must lead to concrete initiatives aimed at the full implementation of the Convention. They urged Annex 1 parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention, particularly the provision of new and additional resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on preferential and concessional basis.

32. The Ministers urged all Member States of the UN to accelerate the process of signature

and ratification of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, with a view to expediting the entry into force and full and effective implementation of the Convention and its regional annexes. There is a need for the international community to provide substantial financial resources and other forms of active support for the efforts of all affected developing country parties, particularly those in Africa, and the least developed countries, to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought.

33. The Ministers welcomed the entry into force of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea and invited countries that have not done so to accede to it. They looked forward to the successful outcome of the forthcoming Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention, including the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. The Ministers noted the recent successful conclusion of the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks as an essential contribution towards conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, and in particular expressed satisfaction at the recognition in the Agreement adopted by the Conference of the special requirements of developing States in relation to the conservation, management and development of fisheries for those stocks.

34. The Ministers welcomed the holding of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and recognized the important role of women in economic and social development. The Ministers confirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Platform for Action, as adopted in Beijing, to achieve equality, development and peace for all, which will require adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources to the developing countries from all available funding mechanisms.

35. The Ministers fully supported the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and its preparatory process. They recognized the two themes of crucial importance for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action: "Sustainable Human Settlements in an Urbanized World" and "Adequate Shelter for All". Achieving adequate shelter for all is central to the socio-economic development and stability of human settlements and a basis for sustainable development. The Ministers expressed the hope that the deliberations and decisions of Habitat II would lead to greater attention to the problems of human settlements as well as increase international cooperation in this field. The Ministers reaffirmed the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000 adopted by the General Assembly in 1988 to address the problem of lack of access to safe and adequate shelter and sanitation and called on Member States and the international community to provide much greater level of financial and other forms of support to implement the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000 and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

36. The Ministers stressed the need for enhanced international mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian and financial assistance to refugees and host countries and promote appropriate shared responsibility.

37. The Ministers reiterated their deep concern at the persistent critical socio-economic situation in Africa and the deteriorating economic conditions and regretted that four years after its adoption, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) remains largely unimplemented. The Ministers expressed disappointment at the failure of the international community, particularly the developed countries, to implement measures to support the development efforts of the countries in Africa as called for, among others, under UN-NADAF and reiterated during the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council on the Development of Africa and the implementation of UN-NADAF. They called upon the international community to increase its assistance to these countries while stressing that the continent's economic and social development depends primarily on the efforts of the African countries themselves and hoped that the mid-term review of the implementation of UN-NADAF would reinvigorate the international commitment to the development of Africa.

38. The Ministers expressed their deep concern at the deteriorating socio-economic condition of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and called for priority action on the many international development commitments towards LDCs, especially those contained in the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for LDCs for the 1990s. In this regard, the Ministers expressed their hope that the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting of the Mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s will be able to recommend new and additional measures for the full and timely implementation of the Programme of Action.

39. The Ministers called on the international community to give special attention and support to the special development problems and needs of the land-locked developing countries, particularly through technical cooperation with and financial assistance by developed countries, and multilateral financial development institutions to enable these countries to effectively participate in a rapidly globalizing world economy. They also noted that as transit developing countries faced serious economic problems their efforts at developing a viable transit infrastructure also needed financial and technical support from the international community.

40. The Ministers called on the international community to give special priority to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and in particular underlined the urgency of new and additional resources to achieve this.

41. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the operational activities for development of the UN system in assisting socio-economic progress of all developing countries, and stressed that such activities should be carried out in accordance with the mandates established by the General Assembly, and within the framework of national priorities of the developing countries and in accordance with national priorities. They expressed disappointment at the continuing decrease in resources available for the UN operational activities for development, and reiterated their call on developed countries to increase their pledges for the financing of the UN operational activities for development on a continuous, predictable and assured basis.

42. They emphasized that improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of the operational activities for development required an urgent increase in the allocation of resources by donor countries on a continuous, predictable and assured basis. In that context, they also reaffirmed that those attempts to continue revising for funding mechanism, reforming the institutional structure and management at the field level or even unifying the administrative capacities of the Funds and Programs, not only undermine the capabilities of each Fund and Program, but also the decline in the availability of resources as the main concern for the fulfilment of agreed objectives and targets.

43. The Ministers emphasized the need for international institutions to attain a truly democratic and international character in terms of equal participation of all members in their decision-making processes in order to meet the challenges of sustaining economic growth and development in the context of the globalization of the world economy and deepening economic interdependence among nations. In this context, they recognized that the UN, being the most important universal institution must, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, play a central and active role in shaping international cooperation for economic growth and development, and examining the issue of development using an integrated approach. They stressed that the mandate of the UN in development and economic matters must be fully exercised and balance ensured in its consideration of development issues vis-a-vis peace-keeping and other issues. The Ministers strongly believed that this mandate could only be strengthened through the political will and cooperation of Member States, including the provision of additional resources aimed at strengthening the UN structures dealing with development to ensure the full implementation of their mandates.

44. The Ministers looked forward to the review to be undertaken at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly on the reforms and revitalization in the economic and social fields and stressed that such was less likely to be successful as long as some major contributors refrained from paying their assessed contributions unconditionally, in full and on time. The Ministers also stressed the need to correct the negative impact of these reforms and to improve the participation of developing countries both in the decision-making process within the governing bodies of the Funds and Programmes of the UN system as well as within the secretariats of the organizations of the U.N. system.

45. The Ministers thus recognized the need for the General Assembly being the highest intergovernmental mechanism for policy formulation and appraisal on matters relating to the economic, social and related fields, to exert more decisively its policy leadership on these issues as provided for in the United Nations Charter. In this regard, they stressed the comprehensive mandate of the United Nations on economic and social issues as stated in the Charter and rejected the notion of division of labour or comparative advantage of specific institutions in the field of development. Moreover, they stressed that ECOSOC's role, as reflected in the Charter and recent General Assembly resolutions, must be fully exercised.

46. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is the sole entity

in the United Nations system dealing with trade and development questions in a comprehensive manner. It is therefore an important focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues. The Ministers therefore attached particular importance to the strengthening of UNCTAD in order to enable this institution to exercise fully its development mandate, particularly with the creation of WTO, in the light of the globalization of the international economy and the deepening economic interdependence among states, and the implications of these phenomena on the prospects of economic growth and development of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the countries of Africa. The Ministers also stressed that UNCTAD had attained greater relevance in the present context after the conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the creation of WTO which has reinforced the need for a policy-oriented forum or institutions with a strong trade and development perspective. They therefore reaffirmed their strong commitment to strengthen UNCTAD and urged the international community to support fully the strengthening of UNCTAD.

47. The Ministers welcomed the appointment of Ambassador Rubens Ricupero, the new Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and were confident that the Secretary-General of the United Nations will provide him with full support to enable him to carry out his tasks. They further welcomed the hosting of the ninth session of UNCTAD by the government of the Republic of South Africa in Johannesburg from 26 April to 11 May 1996, and looked forward to UNCTAD IX as a means towards strengthening UNCTAD's mandate on trade and development and as a forum for generating important contributions and initiatives for development.

48. The Ministers also emphasized the renewed urgency for promoting the industrialization as a key element for the economies of the developing countries as a whole, and the essential role of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in that regard. They believed the role of UNIDO has gained increasing relevance as a result of the globalization of production and the growth of related trade, investment and technology flows, and the implications of these developments on the industrialization of developing countries. They reiterated their resolve to strengthen and support UNIDO in fulfilling its development-oriented programmes.

49. The Ministers further resolved to strengthen the regional economic commissions, which they recognized as valuable development-oriented focal points of the UN system at the regional level and in assisting countries in each region in the implementation of the recommendations of major conferences on development. They stressed the role of these commissions in assisting the General Assembly, through ECOSOC and in conjunction with other specialized agencies to undertake its action- and policy-oriented work in the economic and development field. It was therefore deemed necessary that ECOSOC enhance coordination with and among these bodies. The Ministers called on the UN system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, to support the work of the regional economic commissions.

50. In the light of the increasing role of these institutions in enhancing the development process and international development cooperation, which is the basis for peace and security, the

Ministers pledged to enhance the roles and contributions of these organizations, specialized agencies and regional commissions with regard to the development process.

51. The Ministers called for greater interaction and coordination between the Bretton Woods institutions and other bodies of the U.N. system, including its specialized agencies and organizations at the policy level. This should be considered, on a priority basis, in the context of the Agenda for Development, as called for in General Assembly resolution 47/181. In this regard, the Ministers stressed the need for a review and redefinition of the mandate and functions of the Bretton Woods institutions, including the democratization of their governance and promoting more participative and transparent internal decision-making mechanisms.

52. The Ministers reaffirmed that South-South cooperation was an integral element of international cooperation for development as well as an essential basis for collective self-reliance and economic growth and development. They therefore recognized the need for developing countries to exploit actively all opportunities for expanding South-South Cooperation and the need to examine in-depth how the Caracas Programme of Action (CPA) and the Action Programme on Economic Cooperation (APEC), could complement and reinforce each other. They also emphasized the need to revitalize the implementation of the Global System of Trade Preferences among developing countries (GSTP), especially with regard to the conclusion of the Second Round of GSTP Negotiations. They also recognized that the post-Cold war era offered new opportunities and challenges for South-South cooperation at all levels.

53. They also reaffirmed that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for but is complementary to North-South cooperation. They therefore stressed that it was in the interest of the international community, particularly of the developed country partners, to support South-South cooperation, through financial and other means. In this regard, they called upon the United Nations to consider convening an international conference on South-South cooperation not later than 1997.

54. The Ministers emphasized the increasing importance and complementarity of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries as a means of supporting the development efforts of these countries and ensuring their effective participation in the emerging global economic order that is increasingly shaped by the forces of globalisation and economic liberalization. In this regard, they welcomed the adoption of New Directions by the High-level Committee on the Review of TCDC and also the increased allocation by the Executive Board of UNDP of resources for such activities. They urged the Administrator of UNDP to continue to preserve the separate identity of the Special Unit for TCDC and to provide the necessary resources to enable the Unit to carry out its responsibilities.

55. The Ministers recognized the importance of the role and activities of the South Centre and reiterated their commitment to support the Centre. In this regard, they welcomed the entry into force of the Agreement to Establish the Center and invited all members of the Group who had not done so to consider ratifying the Agreement. They also welcomed the positive outcome

of the First Session of the Council of Representatives held in Geneva on 18 and 19 September 1995, and invited the South Centre to strengthen further its relationship and cooperation with the Group of 77.

56. The Ministers approved the report of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) presented in accordance with the mandates of IFCC-VIII, and approved its recommendations. They expressed satisfaction with the results achieved by PGTF and agreed to explore ways and means to expand its resources. They also congratulated the South Centre, the first recipient of the G-77/UNDP award on ECDC/TCDC.

57. The Ministers welcomed the generous offer made by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to host the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (IFCC-IX), to be held in Manila from 9 to 12 February 1996. In this regard, the Ministers urged Member States of the Group of 77 to participate actively and to be represented at a high level given the importance of this meeting.

58. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the outcome of the Sectoral Review Meeting on Energy, held in Jakarta, Indonesia from 5-7 September 1995 and welcomed the generous offer made by the Government of Guyana to host the Sectoral Review Meeting on Food and Agriculture to be held in Georgetown, from 15-19 January 1996, and urged members of the Group of 77 to participate actively at that meeting.

59. The Ministers commended the Chairmen of the Group of 77 and the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement in operationalizing the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement (JCC). They stressed that coordination and cooperation between these two groups is needed in order to advance the position of the developing countries in various multilateral issues and reaffirmed their commitment to continue such coordination through the JCC.

60. They Ministers welcomed the demarche of the co-chairmen of the JCC to the G7 meeting at Halifax in which the position of developing countries on major development issues and the G-77 Agenda for Development were conveyed. In this regard, the Ministers stressed the importance that developed countries partners, including the G-7, take fully into account the views and interests of the developing countries in their deliberations and decision-making on global economic issues.

61. The Ministers underscored that the occasion of the Eleventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries to be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on October 18-20, 1995 will offer a new and historic opportunity to reinvigorate the joint actions and strategies of the developing countries on international issues and to provide further political impetus to the coordination and cooperation between the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.

62. The Ministers noted the initiation of Palestinian self-government arrangements in the Gaza strip and Jericho area and called for the speedy extension of Palestinian self-government arrangements to encompass the entire occupied territories in implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. In that regard, they reaffirmed their support of the Palestinian people as they strive to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to establish an independent State on their national soil, including Jerusalem. They also reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the question of Palestine. They emphasized the need for international assistance to support Palestinian development efforts in the economic and social fields. The Ministers also reaffirmed their support for the peace process initiated at the Peace Conference on the Middle East held at Madrid, which aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace.

63. The Ministers expressed concern over the serious financial situation of the United Nations due to the failure of Member States, in particular some major contributors, to meet their financial obligations in full and on time under the Charter. This has adversely affected the Organization's capability to implement fully the programmes and activities which Member States have entrusted to it, particularly those in the development field, and also to meet its financial obligations.

64. The Ministers reaffirmed the legal obligation of Member States to bear the expenses of the Organization and the requirement to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. While recognizing the need to extend sympathetic understanding to those that are temporarily unable to meet their financial obligations as a consequence of genuine economic difficulties, in all other cases, the Ministers appealed to the membership, in particular some major contributors, to exert every effort to pay all their dues unconditionally, in full and on time.